

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GEORGE 00806 01 OF 02 021906Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EUR-12 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00

STR-04 CEA-01 COME-00 AGR-05 CU-02 EA-06 LAB-04

SIL-01 SAJ-01 /106 W

----- 019183

P R 021750Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1274

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMCONGEN PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0806

CINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GY CU

SUBJECT: GUYANA'S GROWING TIES WITH CUBA

1. SUMMARY: PM BURNHAM'S RECENT VISIT TO CUBA HIGHLIGHTED INCREASING POLITICAL, IDEOLOGICAL AND PROSPECTIVE ECONOMIC TIES BINDING THE TWO NATIONS. CUBA IS PROBABLY ALREADY THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE NATION WITH WHICH GUYANA'S LEADERS ARE MOST IDEOLOGICALLY ATTUNED. THE INCIPIENT LINKS SEEM LIKELY TO STRENGTHEN AND BROADEN, WITH POTENTIAL POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS ON GUYANA'S RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL, VENEZUELA, SURINAM AND WITH HER CARICOM PARTNERS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GEORGE 00806 01 OF 02 021906Z

LIMITED AND DECLINING U.S. INTERESTS IN GUYANA AND GUYANA'S

PRESENT POLICY OF GENRAL ANTAGONISM TO THE U.S. IN INTERNATIONAL FORA AND ALIGNMENT WITH SOCIALIST CAMP SEEM TO GIVE THE U.S. LITTLE MOTIVATION TO ATTEMPT TO REVERU OR SLOW THIS DEVELOPMENT UNLESS IT IS JUDGED LIKELY TO HARM GREATER U.S. INTERESTS IN OTHER CARICOM STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S RECENT VISIT TO HAVANA, THE FIRST BY A WESTERN HEMISPHERE CHIEF OF GOVT OTHER THAN CHILE'S ALLENDE SINCE CASTRO'S ACCESSION TO POWER, ILLUSTRATED THE GROWING TIES BETWEEN GUYANA AND CUBA. CUBA HAS NOW PROBABLY BECOME THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE NATION WITH WHICH TOP POLITICAL LEADERS OF THE GOG AS WELL AS SOME TOP TECHNOCRATS FEEL MOST CLOSELY POLITICALLY ATTUNED. PM BURNHAM AND OTHER TOP PNC LEADERS HAVE SINCE HIS RETURN FROM CUBA SPOKEN INCREASINGLY OF GUYANA'S COMMITMENT TO ORTHODOX SOCIALISM (GEORGETOWN 773). PNC CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY PM PTOLEMY REID AND LABOR MINISTER CARRINGTON HAVE DEFENDED DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AS APPROPRIATE FOR GUYANA, AND THEY AND BURNHAM HVE VEHEMENTLY DENOUNCED CONCEPT OF FREE ENTERPRISE.

3. THOUGH CUBA, UNLIKE MOST OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN STATES, IS NOT A MEMBER OF CARICOM, THE INDICATIONS OF A DEVELOPING SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUBA AND GUYANA ARE RAPIDLY INCREASING. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BY BURNHAM AND CASTRO IN APRIL THAT RESIDENT EMBASSIES WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN GEORGETOWN AND HAVANA. FOREIGN MINISTER RAMPHAL TOLD ME SUBSEQUENTLY THAT THE CUBAN EMBASSY IN GEORGETOWN SHOULD OPEN IN JUNE (NOW DOUBTFUL) BUT THAT PLANS FOR A GUYANESE EMBASSY AT HAVANA ARE NOT YET SETTLED. BURNHAM ANNOUNCED THAT CASTRO WOULD PAY A RETURN VISIT TO GUYANA LATER IN 1975, AND DATES BETWEEN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER HAVE BEEN SUBSEQUENTLY UNOFFICIALLY MENTIONED. A RESIDENT CUBAN FISHING MISSION HAS BEEN IN GEORGETOWN SINCE EARLY 1974, AND CUBAN TRADE AND TECHNICAL MISSIONS HAVE BEEN FREQUENT VISITORS. APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF THE AUDIENCE OF AROUND EIGHTY PEOPLE AT A RECENT LECTURE IN GEORGETOWN MARKING THE 105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF LENIN ND SPONSORED BY THE GUYANA-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY APPEARED TO BE CUBANS, PRESUMABLY IN LARGE PART FROM THE MISSION, APPROXIMATELY 10 CUBAN FISHING TRAWLERS AND ONE MOTHER SHIP PRESENTLY OPERATE OUT OF GEORGETOWN. AS PART OF THE FISHERIES

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GEORGE 00806 01 OF 02 021906Z

AGREEMENT WITH CUBA, 45 GUYANESE ARE PRESENTLY BEING TRAINED IN FISHING IN CUBA, WITH A GROUP OF ROUGHLY SIMILAR SIZE DUE TO GO TO CUBA IN SEPTEMBER.

4. TRADE IS STILL MINIMAL BETWEEN GUYANA AND CUBA, AND EXPORTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE MUCH MORE COMPETITIVE THAN COMPLEMENTARY. GUYANA HAS SHIPPED SEVERAL LOADS OF TIMBER TO CUBA, THOUGH MUCH OF THE TIMBER PREPARED FOR SHIPMENT WAS REJECTED AS UNSATIS-

FACTORY BY THE CUBAN INSPECTORS. THE GOG HAS JUUT ANNOUNCED THAT 10,000 TONS OF RICE ARE TO BE SHIPPED TO CUBA AND THAT CUBAN CEMENT WILL BE PURCHASED BY GUYANA IN RETURN. BURNHAM HAS ALSO PROMOTED AMONG FUGYANESE THE IDEA THAT CUBA OFFERS ATTRACTIVE MARKET FOR LOCAL TIMBER DESPITE UNSATISFACTORY FIRST SHIPMENTS.

5. SEVERAL TECHNICAL DELEGATIONS FROM GUYANA HAVE VISITED CUBA OVER THE PAST YEAR AND BURNHAM WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION ON HIS CUBAN TRIP. CUBAN ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA IN SUGAR PRODUCTION WAS OFFERED AND ACCEPTED INPRINCIPLE# AND NOW SEEMS LIKELY TO NEWLY-NATIONZLIZED DEMERARA SUGAR COMPANY (GEORGETOWN 782). THE MINISTER OF HEALTH TRAVELLED TO CUBA EARLIER IN THE YEAR. OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH MEMBERS OF SOME OF THESE DELEGATIONS SHOWED STRONG OPINION THAT CUBA OFFERD AN EXCELLENT MODEL FOR GUYANA IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, SOCIAL MOBILIZATIO AND SOME ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE. THERE WAS LITTLE APPARENT CONCERN WITH THE LACK OF CIVIL LIBERTIES OR THE LARGE SOVIET PRESENCE IN CUBA.

6. IN TRAINING AND EDUCATION, THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE ON A PLAN WHEREBY GUYANA WOULD ESTABLISH A SPANISH LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM WITH CUBAN PARTICIPATIONOR ASSISTANCE, POSSIBLY BY EXPANDING EXISTING SPANISH DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA, TO TRAIN PROSPECTIVE GUYANESE STUDENTS TO CUBA. AN INITIAL CLASS FOR GUYANESE GOING TO CUBA FOR SUBSEQUENT TECHNICAL TRAINING HAS ALREADY BEGUNUSING CUBAN-SUPPLIED PROPAGANDA LADEN MATERIALS. THE CUBANS HAVE AGREED TO ACCEPT A SIGNIFICANT BUT UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF MEDICAL TRAINEES FOR M.D. AND RELATED DEGREES. THE PEMANENT SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH TOLD US THAT GUYANA PREFERS SUCH TRAINING IN CUBA OVER TRAINING IN THE WEST BECAUSE OF THE GREATER EMPHASIS ON PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE IN CUBA AND BECAUSE OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 GEORGE 00806 01 OF 02 021906Z

THE LESSER LIKELIHOOD THAT CUBAN-TRAINED PHYSICIANS WILL EMIGRATE FROM GUYANA TO COUNTRIES IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD. BURNHAM LATER PUBLICLY CALLED ON GUYANESE MEDICAL STUDENTS AT UWI (JAMAICA) TO DO THEIR INTERNSHIPS IN CUBA RATHER THAN IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. AT THE HAVANA MEETING, BURNHAM AND CASTRO ALSO AGREED THAT GUYANA WOULD TRAIN CUBAN STUDENTS IN ENGLISH. WE UNDERSTAND A SPECIAL ENGLISH PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE GUYANA WILL BE SET UP FOR 40 CUBAN STUDENTS WITHIN THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS
(CONT...)

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GEORGE 00806 02 OF 02 021919Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EUR-12 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00

STR-04 CEA-01 COME-00 AGR-05 CU-02 EA-06 LAB-04

SIL-01 SAJ-01 /106 W

----- 019416

P R 021750Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1275

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMCONGEN PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0806

CINCSO FOR POLAD

6. IN THE CULTURAL FIELD, THOUGH CUBA HL NOT YET SHOWN INTENSIVE ACTIVITY, IT AND THE PRC ARE THE ONLY NATIONS DURING THE PAST YEAR T HAVE SENT LARGE PERFORMING GROUPS TO GUYANA. CUBA'S GROUP WAS HERE EARLY THIS YEAR DURING REPUBLIC DAY CEREMONIES. IT WAS WARMLY RECEIVED A THE TOP LEVEL BUT SEEMED TO EVOKE LITTLE POPULAR INTEREST. IN THE RELIGIOUS FIELD, THE CARIBBEAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES SPONSORED A VISIT TO GUYANA IN APRIL OF CUBAN BAPTIST LEADER WHO EMPHASIZED THAT HIS ROLE AS NOT ONLY TO GIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP BUT ALSO "AFFIRM (CUBAN) GOVT POLICY".

7. DESPITE THE FACT THAT HISTORICALLY MOSCOW-LINE COMMUNIST-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GEORGE 00806 02 OF 02 021919Z

CONTROLLED OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP) HAS REGULARLY SENT DELEGATES TO COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESSES OVERSEAS, INCLUDING ALL SUCH CONGRESSES AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MASS ORIENTATION MEETINGS IN CUBA, DIRECT TIES BETWEEN THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS (PNC) IN GUYANA AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA ARE NOW DEVELOPING. ULISES ESTRADA, DEPUTY HEAD OF THE AMERICAS DEPT OF THE PCC, ACCOMPANIED PM BURNHAM BACK TO GUYANA IN APRIL. WHILE HERE, ESTRADA CONFERRED WITH PNC LEADERS AND PARTY GROUPS. THE PNC ORGAN "NEW NATION" ON APRIL 20 CLAIMED THAT DURING ESTRADA'S VISIT "FORMAL RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE PEOPLES NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY". ISABELLA HERNANDES APANES, HEAD OF THE CARIBBEAN AND AMERICAS DIVISION OF THE CUBAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HAS ALSO VISITED GUYANA ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, AND CUBAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEMBER JUAN ORTEJA WAS HERE IN APRIL. LEO IRD DURANTE, HEAD OF THE PNC LABOR DESK, RETURNED FROM CUBA ON MAY 7 AFTER REPRESENTING GUYANA AT CUBA'S LABOR DAY CELEBRATION (WHERE HE SEEMS TO HAVE DISPLACED THE PPP). HE ANNOUNCED THAT ANOTHER PCC TOP OFFICIAL WAS EXPECTED SHORTLY IN GUYANA FOR FURTHER TALKS WITH THE PNC ON CLOSER RELATIONS AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE PNC WOULD SEEK COMMUNIST ASSISTANCE FOR A NEW TRADE UNION CENTER. THE GOVT-OWNED PRESS, WHILE DENOUNCING TRAINING OF GUYANESE LABOR LEADERS IN THE WEST (ECHOING BURNHAM AND OTHER PNC FIGURES) HAS EDITORIALIZED IN FAVOR OF SUCH TRAINING IN CUBA. SINCE GUYANA IS MOVING TOWARD A DEFACTO ONE-PARTY STATE AND A SELF-PROCLAIMED DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND SINCE SUBORDINATION OF GOG TO PNC IS PROGRESSING RAPIDLY, THIS DEVELOPING TIE WITH THE PNC (WHICH NOW PROCLAIMS A DOCTRINAIRE SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY) COULD BE HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT IN THE CONTEXT OF GOG-CUBA BILATERAL RELATIONS.

8. CUBA IS ALREADY BEGINNING TO BE SPOKEN OF AS A MODEL FOR GUYANA IN THE SAME DAWAY AS ARE TANZANIA AND THE PRC. HOWEVER, THE PRC IS DISTANT AND ALIEN. ITS LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES BY AND LARGE NEITHER SPEAK ENGLISH NOR MINGLE WITH GUYANESE LEADERS IN A "CARIBBEAN" WAY. TANZANIA IS DISTANT, WEAK AND AT PRESENT ANYTHING BUT A SUCCESSFUL ECONOMIC MODEL. CUBA IS CARIBBEAN, WIDELY PERCEIVED LOCALLY AS SUCCESSFUL, CONTAINS A SUBSTANTIAL AFRICAN ELEMENT, AND IS IDEOLOGICALLY ATTRACTIVE TO THE PROFESSED RADICAL SOCIALISTS WHO ARE LEADING GUYANA. PREVIOUSLY, PM BURNHAM HAS DISTRUSTED AND FEARED THE SOVIET UNION AS A SUPPORTER

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GEORGE 00806 02 OF 02 021919Z

OF THE OPPOSITION PPP AND HAS BEEN SUSPICIOUS OF CUBA AS AN ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL SURROGATE FOR THE USSR. THESE FEARS HAVE NOT VANISHED, AND HIS RADICAL SHIFT MAY BE BASED IN PART ON HIS PERCEPTION OF A DECLINE OF THE WEST ON THE WORLD SCENE. WITH THE CURRENT WEAKNESS OF THE PPP AND A RESIDENT SOVIET PRESENCE, BURNHAM MAY NOW FEEL THAT THE USSR AND CUBA CAN BE WON OVER TO A POSITION

OF SUPPORT FOR THE DEMONSTRABLY MORE EFFECTIVE, RADICALIZING
AND VEHEMENTLY ANTI-CAPITALIST PNC.

9. ON A RADIO TALK SHOW APRIL 16, BURNHAM REITERATED HIS BELIEF
THAT GUYANA COULD SERVE AS A "BRIDGE" ETWEEN
CUBA AND THE REST OF CARICM, NOTED HIS CONVICTION THAT CUBA
WOULD EVENTUALLY JOIN CARICTM, AND SPELLED OUT HIS HOPE THAT
GUYANA WOULD LEAD THE OTHER CARICOM COUNTRIES ON A SOCIALIST PATH,
IF PRESENT INCIPIENT TREAND CONTINUES, CUBA SEEMS LIKELY, POSSIBLY
ALONG WITH THE PRC, TO BECOME GUYANA'S PRINCIPAL ALLY AND EXTERNAL
POLITICAL MENTOR.

10. WHILE THE DIRECT IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A DEVELOPMENT FOR THE U.
S. SEEM TO BE MINIMAL, GIVEN OUR LIMITED INTEREST IN GUYANA AND
WITH GUYANA IN ANY EVENT ALREADY FOLLOWING A POLICY OF CONSSTENT
OPPOSITION TO THE U.S. IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, EFFECT ON
GUYANA'S RELATIONS WITH HER CARICOM PARTNES AND WITH NEIGHBORING
VENEZUELA, BRAZIL AND SOON-TO BE INDEPENDENT SURINAM, LIKELY TO
BE MORE SIGNIFICANT. SINCE WE LACK EFFECTIVE LEVERAGE WITH BURNHAM
AND THE GOG, THERE IS ITTLE WE CAN DO DIRECTLY WITH THE GOG TO
DETER ITS DEVELOPING SPECIAL RELATIONSHI WITH CUBA. HOWE ER, AN
EFFECTIVE CHANNEL MIGHT BE THROUGH CAREFULLY RATIONALIZED LOW-
KEYED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN TO OTHER LESS RADICAL CARIBBEAN
STATES, SUCH AS VENEZUELA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, AND BARBADOS
WITH WHICH GUYANA HAS IMPORTANT TIES, AND POSSIBLY TO BRAZIL.
THESE APPROACHES WOULD FOCUS ON NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF CLOSE
GUYANESE-CUBAN RELATIONS ON THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENT OF CARICOM, ON THE SECURITY OF VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL,
ETC; WITHOUT GIVING ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION THAT U.S. IS STILL
ADVOCATING ISOLATION OF CUBA IN HEMISPHERE. IF BURNHAM BECAME
CONVINCED THAT HIS REALTIONSHIP WITH CUBA WAS ENDANGERING HIS
MUCH MORE VITAL RELATIONS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES, HE MIGHT RETURN
TO A MORE MODERATE AND PRGMATIC COURSE LESS ANTAGONISTIC TO OUR
INTERESTS.

KREBS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 GEORGE 00806 02 OF 02 021919Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, SOCIALISM, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975GEORGE00806
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750192-0311
From: GEORGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750690/aaaadeph.tel
Line Count: 318
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <17 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUYANA'S GROWING TIES WITH CUBA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, OVIP, GY, CU, (BURNHAM, L F S)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006